

Ideas to utilize upcoming American Rescue Plan dollars
Washoe County will be collecting feedback until November 30, 2021

Through the passage of the American Rescue Act of 2021 (H.R. 1319), state and local aid will be distributed to States, local governments, and tribal governments in the same manner as Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) from the CARES Act.

Funds are required to be spent within the following categories:

- Response to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts
- Response to workers performing essential work during the public health emergency
- The provision of government services due to revenue reduction
- Make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure

Members of community stakeholder groups and the public are encouraged to share their ideas using the form provided below.

Required

1.Name

Age Friendly Livable Reno Action Group, Donna Clontz AARP NV Lead Volunteer

2.Email donnanorm1@yahoo.com

3.Zip Code

89509, 89519, 89523, 89431, and 89436

4.Idea to utilize ARPA funds within the categories listed above

Response to public health emergency and its negative impacts for Washoe County older adults; provision of government services due to revenue reduction, especially focused on preventing homelessness by increasing access to affordable housing.

Idea: Create and fund a new pilot project to encourage landlords to offer tenants multi-year leases, the Elder Lease Project

The Age Friendly Livable Reno Action Group (made up of community members/service provider representatives, as well as members of Washoe County Senior Advisory Board, Sparks Senior Citizen Advisory Committee and Reno Senior Citizen Advisory Committee) recommend creation and funding of a 2-year pilot project to increase elders' ability to stabilize their rents by entering into multiyear leases with their landlords. The Age Friendly Livable Reno Action Plan has three priorities: to increase affordable housing, improve access to community and healthcare services and improve transportation options.

The following idea, contained in our 2020-2023 Action Plan was proposed by one of our Action Planning Group members, Marsy Kupfersmith. With the lack of enough affordable housing and rents increasing rapidly, many elders fear their pensions and other fixed income resources cannot keep up. They fear losing their homes when they can no longer afford increased rent. We urge the

County Commission to fund some projects that could increase affordable housing options for Washoe County elders caught in this rising rent crisis.

We propose creating a pilot project for low- and mid-income renters to encourage local landlords to use multi-year leases with future rent increases contained in the lease so both landlord and tenant know what to expect and can plan for future cost increases. Possible ways to incentivize landlords to do this would be to offer a small property tax rebate or cash incentive which would be funded by an ARPA grant. The Washoe County Senior Advisory Board and the Age Friendly Livable Reno Action Group support a proposal from the Human Services Agency (HSA) to hire a navigator/real estate expert within HSA to identify and negotiate with landlords willing to do affordable rentals with elders. This grant could go to HSA's Housing Navigator (if funded) or to a local nonprofit such as Center for Healthy Aging to hire the staff and administer the funds. Possible budget categories would be salary of a contracted Housing Navigator, and funds for tax rebates or cash incentives for participating landlords.

For Reno -

The elder community makes up about 30% of Reno's population and has been historically underserved. Many Reno elders live alone on low- and fixed-incomes and face imminent homelessness as rents rise dramatically. They struggle to pay for their rent, food, healthcare costs, medicine, transportation and other vital costs. Creating a pilot project specifically for elders to connect them to landlords willing to enter into multiyear leases would eliminate the fear and stress of an uncertain future while the multiyear lease is in effect. It would be a win-win for both landlords and elder tenants to be able to plan ahead financially.

Output- Increased number of multiyear leases for elder tenants

Output- Increased number of landlords offering multiyear leases to elder tenants

Outcome- Elders stay in their homes and avoid homelessness

Outcome - Landlords have stable rental income streams for their apartments

Landlords all over the US use multiyear leases for their tenants and both benefit from these agreements. Tenants have a stable homes and landlords avoid costs of high turnover. See the following link for more information

<https://www.rentecdirect.com/blog/multiyear-lease-for-landlords>

Please contact the Age Friendly Planning Group for more information or contact Amber Howell, Washoe County HSA Director for more information on the Housing Navigator proposal at ahowell@washoecounty.us